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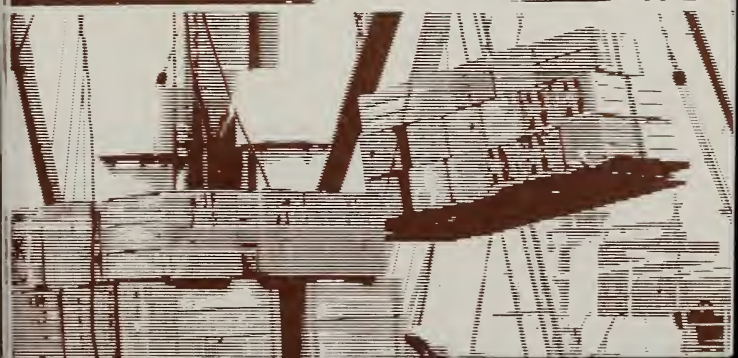
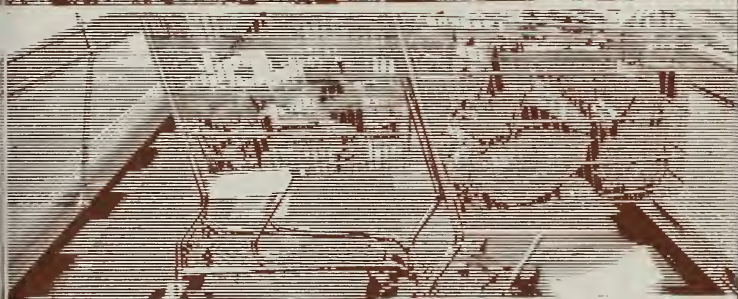
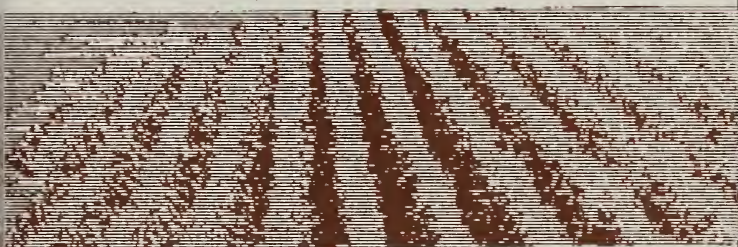
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United States Department of Agriculture
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Your United States Department of Agriculture

How it serves people on the
FARM, and in the COMMUNITY,
NATION, and WORLD





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Special Programs Center
Office of Governmental and Public Affairs
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Revised November 1982

USDA Agencies

Agricultural Cooperative Service	ACS
Agricultural Marketing Service	AMS
Agricultural Research Service	ARS
Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service	ASCS
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	APHIS
Cooperative State Research Service	CSRS
Economic Research Service	ERS
Extension Service	ES
Farmers Home Administration	FmHA
Federal Crop Insurance Corporation	FCIC
Federal Grain Inspection Service	FGIS
Food and Nutrition Service	FNS
Food Safety and Inspection Service	FSIS
Foreign Agricultural Service	FAS
Forest Service	FS
Human Nutrition Information Service	HNIS
National Agricultural Library	NAL
Office of Consumer Advisor	OCA
Office of Energy	OE
Office of Governmental and Public Affairs	OGPA
Office of International Cooperation and Development	OICD
Office of Rural Development Policy	ORDP
Office of Transportation	OT
Packers and Stockyards Administration	P&SA
Rural Electrification Administration	REA
Soil Conservation Service	SCS
Statistical Reporting Service	SRS
World Agricultural Outlook Board	WAOB

USDA's Broad Responsibilities

Your U.S. Department of Agriculture serves all of us every day. It works to improve farm income, to expand overseas markets for farm products, and to assure consumers of an adequate food supply at reasonable prices.

The Department works to safeguard the wholesomeness of our food supply through inspection of food processing plants, and assures food quality through voluntary food grading services.

Through nutrition education, USDA helps consumers choose nourishing foods and get the most for their food dollars. It also provides the less fortunate with better diets through food assistance programs.

The Department's widespread agricultural research makes a significant contribution to our standard of living. The research covers animal production, plant and animal diseases and pest controls, crop production, marketing and the use of agricultural products, nutrition, food safety, and forestry.

USDA protects the environment by helping farmers and other rural landowners conserve energy, soil, water, and forest resources; it also helps developing countries improve their food production. USDA programs in the fields of rural development, housing assistance, and conservation are key elements in carrying out national growth policies.

How It Started

USDA was created in 1862 by an act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln. A little more than 25 years later, USDA became the eighth executive Department to achieve Cabinet rank. In the early days, the Department served a population engaged primarily in agriculture as a livelihood. A farmer in Lincoln's time produced only enough farm products to supply himself and three or four others.

Today's Department serves a Nation in which less than 4 percent of the population lives on farms—a Nation in which an agricultural worker provides food and fiber for himself and 78 others.

Relationship to Land-Grant Colleges

In 1862 Congress passed the Morrill Act, establishing the system of "land-grant" colleges in the Nation. The act donated 11 million acres of public lands to the States and territories to provide funds for colleges to support the agricultural and mechanical arts.

Following the Civil War, a number of black institutions similar to the white land-grant schools were established in Southern States, but were given only limited support by the States.

To overcome this problem, Congress passed the second Morrill Act, in 1890, specifically to support the black land-grant schools. Thus, the schools are referred to as the "1890 institutions." In addition, each of the Southern States which did not have a black land-grant school at the time established one under the second Morrill Act.

Today, there are 16 "1890 institutions" plus Tuskegee Institute and 56 "1862 institutions" in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the District of Columbia, Micronesia, and American Samoa.

In 1887 Congress authorized an agricultural experiment station in each State and territory. In 1914 it established the Cooperative Extension Service for each State to disseminate the findings of agricultural and home economics research to farmers and the general public.

These acts were followed by others to strengthen college teaching, research, and extension activities of the States. The land-grant colleges and experiment stations in cooperation with the Department have made American agriculture the most productive in the world, and the consumer's food supply one of the least expensive.

Activities of USDA

Research and Education

USDA works closely with State experiment stations, State Cooperative Extension Services, State departments of agriculture, schools of forestry, farmer cooperatives, and other public and private agencies conducting agricultural research and education. USDA also administers Federal grant funds for research and extension in States.

One of several USDA agencies, the *Agricultural Research Service* (ARS) conducts basic, applied, and developmental research of regional, national, or international concern in the fields of livestock; plants; soil, water, and air quality; energy; food safety and quality; nutrition; food processing, storage, and distribution efficiency; nonfood agricultural products; and international development.

ARS' Office of Higher Education provides direction and national leadership for strengthening formal education and training programs in the food and agricultural sciences. The aim is to increase the number of college graduates in subjects needed by the Nation. The office works closely with associations and organizations representing U.S. colleges and universities to help develop and maintain superior education programs in agriculture, natural resources, forestry, veterinary medicine, and home economics. The higher education office administers the Bankhead-Jones Act, which authorizes funds to support teaching programs at land-grant institutions in agriculture, the



mechanical arts, and related fields. The office also administers grants to strengthen undergraduate and graduate programs in the food and agricultural sciences, and fellowships for promising students. An additional responsibility of the office is coordinating the Department's Research Apprenticeship Program for high school students.

Another USDA agency, the *Cooperative State Research Service* (CSRS), administers Federal formula and grant funds to land-grant colleges and universities, State agricultural experiment stations, schools of forestry, colleges, universities, and other research organizations. CSRS also is extensively involved in research program planning and coordination, and encourages cooperation among the States and between the States and their Federal research partners.

Through its competitive grants program, CSRS funds basic research in selected high-priority areas related to food production—photosynthesis, nitrogen fixation, genetic engineering, and biological stress, for example—and human nutrition. Qualified scientists in the Federal Government, colleges and universities, State agricultural experiment stations, and private organizations or corporations may submit research proposals.

USDA's *Extension Service* (ES) is the primary educational arm for the Department. Federal, State, and local governments share in financing and conducting cooperative extension educational programs to help farmers, processors, handlers, farm families, communities, and consumers apply the results of food and agricultural research. Major program areas include more efficient production and marketing of agricultural products, natural resource management, family living, 4-H youth development, nutrition, and community and rural development.

The *National Agricultural Library* (NAL) provides comprehensive information services for the food and agricultural sciences through a variety of methods. These include printed bibliographies, personal reference services, loans, photocopies, and online data files. Services are provided to agricultural colleges, research institutions, government agencies, agricultural associations, industry, individual scientists, farmers, and the general public. NAL cooperates with the Library of Congress and the

National Library of Medicine to provide access to publications worldwide in the agricultural, chemical, and biological sciences.

NAL houses one of the largest collections in the free world on agricultural subjects—1.6 million volumes—including biology, chemistry, nutrition, forestry, soil sciences, and other topics supporting agricultural research.

Another USDA agency, the *Forest Service (FS)*—under authority of the McSweeney-McNary Forestry Research Act—carries on forestry research through eight regional forest and range experiment stations, the Forest Prod-



ucts Laboratory, and the Institute of Tropical Forestry.

This research enables foresters to improve the management and utilization of resources in the National Forest System and in other publicly administered lands as well as privately owned forest lands, including small woodland properties. Research covers problems in five fields: timber, watersheds, forage, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Basic research deals with protection of these resources from fire, insects, diseases, and other natural destructive agents. Still other research projects cover application of genetic modifications, fertilization, and other techniques to increase forest growth; timber harvest engineering leading to improved methods of tree removal and road construction; better utilization of forest products; forest economics and forest product marketing; and national, regional, and State timber resource inventories.

The inventories, made periodically, determine acreage of forest lands and volumes and quality of timber; trends in growth and harvest; and projections of future supply, demand, and use.

Information

Each USDA agency provides information about its work to farmers, industry, and to consumers. The *Office of Governmental and Public Affairs* (GPA) plans, develops, and executes Departmental information programs; and coordinates internal agency activities pertaining to the following:

- Publications, both technical and popular, which present the results of research and information about USDA regulatory and service programs.

- Current information, which includes press, radio, and television materials, and special projects.

- Visuals, including exhibits, photographs, graphics, and motion pictures.

GPA also serves as liaison for information requested by Congress and other branches of government, as well as the general public, on farm and consumer-related programs. GPA also publishes the *Yearbook of Agriculture*, which contains a wide variety of articles on a single theme. These articles are prepared by researchers, specialists, and other authorities on agricultural subjects.

Marketing Services

The *Agricultural Cooperative Service* (ACS) provides research, management, and educational assistance to cooperatives to strengthen the economic position of farmers and other rural residents. Direct technical assistance is provided on request to help farmers and their cooperatives improve marketing efforts. The agency maintains five field offices and a national training center to help new cooperatives.

The *Agricultural Marketing Service* (AMS) helps the private marketing system move food and other farm products from producer to consumer quickly and efficiently, with the greatest fairness to all.

AMS establishes standards for grades indicating the quality of cotton; tobacco; spirits of turpentine and rosin; feeder cattle and pigs; meat; poultry; eggs; dairy products; and fresh,



frozen, canned, and dried fruits and vegetables. It also provides grading services for most of these commodities.

Grading services are available on request and for a fee, and are often provided in cooperation with State departments of agriculture. In a related service, AMS checks food purchases to make sure they meet contract specifications of individual firms.

The agency also purchases food for distribution through programs of the Food and Nutrition Service.

AMS collects market news daily on various kinds and qualities of agricultural products, including their prices and movement in major markets. The agency helps to strengthen farm income and expand markets through programs that encourage consumption of foods in temporary overabundance.

AMS also promotes fair play in marketing through administration of the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act, the U.S. Warehouse Act, the Federal Seed Act, the Plant Variety Protection Act, and the Agricultural Fair Practices Act.

Through marketing orders and agreements, AMS puts a floor under prices received by farmers for milk and helps to stabilize the volume or quality of fruits and vegetables going to market. The agency also assists producers in promulgating commodity research and promotion programs authorized by Congress, and then monitors activities of the boards appointed to administer the programs.

AMS also conducts research programs aimed at improving the efficiency of the marketing system and improving the techniques for maintaining product quality. Research is conducted on facilities, equipment, commodities, and techniques to improve the handling, processing, sorting, packaging, storage, and physical distribution of agricultural products.

Many AMS programs are carried out in cooperation with State agencies. Consumers indirectly benefit from many AMS programs, since they are designed to assure adequate, dependable supplies of food and other farm products.

The *Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service* (APHIS) helps to safeguard the health and quality of the Nation's agricultural animals and plants.



Protection of our farm products begins at the ports of entry, where APHIS maintains close surveillance of all animal and plant imports, cargoes, and passenger baggage to prevent the entry of foreign pests or diseases of animals and plants.

APHIS cooperates with the States and the agricultural industry to eradicate and control animal diseases of national importance. In addition the agency helps guard all Americans from those diseases which can be transmitted from animals to man.

The agency also cooperates with the States and the agricultural industry to control or eradicate native or alien pests and diseases of plants which pose an interstate menace. Close surveillance is maintained nationwide of pest infesta-

tions to identify potential problems and organize effective control programs.

Typical of these cooperative activities are the current campaigns to control the gypsy moth, which is capable of defoliating shade trees and entire forests; the screwworm, a flesh-eating menace of livestock, wildlife, and other warm-blooded animals; and the Mediterranean fruit fly, which attacks over 200 fruit and vegetable crops.

APHIS also licenses the manufacturers and marketers of veterinary biologics to ensure the purity and effectiveness of these products. In its role as a regulatory agency, it enforces the laws requiring humane treatment of dogs, cats, and other small animals used for research; zoo animals and animals used in exhibitions; and horses.

The *Federal Grain Inspection Service* (FGIS) establishes official U.S. standards for grain and administers a nationwide system of grain



inspection to certify the grades. FGIS also regulates the weighing of all grain leaving any export facility in the United States. All substantial exporters of U.S. grain are required to register with FGIS and provide agency officials with information about company ownership, management, control, and locations.

The U.S. Grain Standards Act of 1976, under which FGIS was established, requires that all U.S. grain destined for export, with some exceptions, undergo inspection as it is loaded aboard ships. Export grain is inspected by FGIS or by State departments of agriculture under authority by FGIS. Domestic grain marketed at inland locations is inspected under FGIS supervision by State departments of agriculture and private firms.

The *Packers and Stockyards Administration* (P&SA) administers the Packers and Stockyards Act, a fair trade law designed to promote fair and open competition and financial protection in the marketing of livestock, meat, and poultry in interstate and foreign commerce.

Regulations issued under the P&S Act set forth rules and policy statements which facilitate and guide the free market process as products pass along the marketing chain, from livestock producers to dealers and market agencies, and on down the line to packers and distributors.

The P&S Act also functions as a safeguard to farmers and ranchers in ensuring that they get the true market value for their livestock and poultry. It protects members of the livestock, poultry, and meat industries from unfair, deceptive, discriminatory, and monopolistic practices of competitors. And it protects consumers against unfair business practices.

Transportation

The *Office of Transportation* (OT), established in 1978, develops USDA's transportation policies, and concentrates on solving some of the major transportation problems facing rural areas, particularly those related to the deterioration of rural roads and bridges.

The agency provides technical assistance, information, and economic analysis to agricultural producers, shippers, and carriers; and administers research and programs designed to improve agricultural marketing. OT also represents the agricultural community before Federal regulatory agencies.

Energy

The *Office of Energy* (OE) provides leadership and direction to USDA's energy programs. It coordinates policies and strategies for the allocation of scarce fuel resources, and represents the Department on energy matters. OE also maintains contact with Members of Congress and public interest groups in the development of legislative energy proposals. Recent activities of the agency include coordinating a comprehensive plan for the production and use of biomass energy, working with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on "essential agricultural uses" of natural gas under the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978, implementing provisions of the Energy Security Act of 1980, and working with international organizations regarding the use of energy in agriculture and the impacts of biomass energy creation on food and fiber production.

Food and Consumer Services

The *Food and Nutrition Service* (FNS) administers a number of Federal-State programs to provide food assistance to those in need. The agency cooperates with State and local welfare



agencies in administering the Food Stamp Program, which enables low-income families to purchase a greater variety of food to improve their diets. Additional agency programs help reduce agricultural surpluses by providing commodities and other foodstuffs to schools and other institutions for their use in special nutrition programs. These programs are designed to help needy children achieve nutritionally balanced diets. The Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides specific nutritious food supplements to pregnant and nursing women, as well as children up to 5 years of age who are found to be "at nutritional risk" because of poor diet or low income. The Food Distribution Program donates food to various outlets—schools, charitable institutions, nutrition programs for the elderly, summer camps, disaster relief agencies, and programs for needy families on some Indian reservations.

The *Food Safety and Inspection Service* (FSIS) focuses on the Department's long-time concern over food safety. It assures consumers that the meat and poultry products they pur-



chase are safe, wholesome, and truthfully labeled.

FSIS administers the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Poultry Products Inspection Act, which provide for uniform Federal-State inspection of all meat and poultry products. Inspection regulations require advance approval of the construction and equipment of plants operating in interstate commerce; inspection of animals and birds before, during, and after slaughter; continuous inspection of all processing operations; and advance approval of labels for meat and poultry products.

The inspection program includes surveillance to guard against harmful bacteria and residues in meat and poultry products, and monitoring of inspection in foreign plants handling meat and poultry for export to the United States.

Under the inspection acts, the agency assists State inspection programs in plants dealing in intrastate trade or assumes inspection in States where the programs are not equal to Federal inspection.

FSIS also establishes standards of identity or content for processed meat and poultry products.

The *Human Nutrition Information Service* (HNIS), organized in 1981, conducts and interprets research in human nutrition to improve professional and public understanding of the nutritional adequacy of diets and food supplies as well as the nutritive value of food. It also provides information to improve the nutritional quality of diets.

HNIS responsibilities include collecting and analyzing data on the nutrient composition of foods and developing a data base on the nutritional content and quality of American diets; conducting research and analysis to improve the interpretation and application of human nutrition research through nutrition education programs; and assembling and collecting food and nutrition education materials and disseminating these materials to State educational agencies and other interested parties.

The *Office of the Consumer Advisor* (OCA) establishes and maintains Departmental policy regarding consumer issues; and monitors the policies, practices, and procedures of USDA programs in the area of consumer affairs.

The agency serves as a focal point for coordinating USDA actions on problems and issues

of importance to consumers, as well as dealing with complaints about USDA policies and programs.

Trade and Aid

The *Foreign Agricultural Service* (FAS) is responsible for expanding foreign markets for U.S. agricultural products. It analyzes and reports developments in world agricultural production and trade. The agency also represents the interests of U.S. agriculture in trade negotiations and at international forums related to food and agriculture. FAS maintains attaches in more than 60 countries to provide a constant flow of agricultural information from around the world.

Through its General Sales Manager, FAS administers Public Law 480 (the "Food for Peace" law), which deals with concessional credit of agricultural commodities and food donations to friendly foreign countries. The General Sales Manager also administers an export sales program, which is based upon short-term credit arrangements.

In addition, FAS is responsible for reporting sales and shipments of U.S. farm products by American exporters.



The *Office of International Cooperation and Development* (OICD) was established in 1978 to strengthen the Department's role in technical assistance and training for developing countries. The office also coordinates USDA activities with those of international organizations concerned with food, agriculture, and economic development. In addition, the agency coordinates international scientific exchanges undertaken by the Department.

Economics and Statistics

The *Economic Research Service* (ERS) analyzes various topics related to domestic and foreign agriculture and rural America.

The agency makes both short and long-range projections for supply, demand, and use of specific crops, dairy products, livestock, poultry products, and other items, and estimates prices at the farm gate and at the retail level.

ERS also conducts a detailed review of foreign agriculture and trade, and the potential for U.S. sales abroad. In addition, the agency assesses foreign developments and agricultural policies in relation to domestic agricultural production, supplies, and demand in order to forecast trade prospects.

ERS also conducts economic research on the impact of environmental regulations on food production, for example, or on the use of land and water in agriculture. Another important area of research carried out by the agency concerns the performance of the agricultural industry, including the production, processing, and marketing sectors.

Additionally, ERS examines trends in the rural population, employment, and housing, and economic adjustment problems.

The *Statistical Reporting Service* (SRS) collects a wide range of information on crops, livestock, dairying, poultry, prices and labor, and on other agriculture-related items. It publishes the official USDA estimates on these items (for the Nation and each State) through its Crop Reporting Board and 44 field offices.

The information is gathered through scientific surveys conducted by mail, telephone, personal interview, and in-the-field observation, and is used by virtually every group associated with farming and ranching and agricultural processing and marketing.

Information on crops, for example, provides estimates of acreages farmers intend to plant,



acres actually seeded and harvested, production and disposition of the commodity, and stocks. Livestock and poultry estimates indicate inventory numbers, breeding intentions, and production possibilities. Dairy estimates cover milk output, cow numbers, and manufactured products.

Other estimates note prices received by farmers for nearly 200 products and prices paid for about 500 production goods. SRS also collects and releases information on fertilizer, seeds, flowers, grain and oilseed stocks, cold storage holdings, and crop weather conditions.

The *World Agricultural Outlook Board* (WAOB) was created in 1977 to coordinate USDA analyses of the agricultural situation in the United States and throughout the world. The board provides accurate, objective, and timely information on world events that could affect the U.S. agricultural system.

The board ensures a constant flow of vital information to policymakers and the public. Among the board's responsibilities is leadership of USDA interagency committees for the major commodities. These committees develop the Department's official estimates of commodity outlook, including forecasts of foreign and domestic agricultural production and trade, U.S. farm prices, farm income, and food prices. Another major responsibility of the board involves monitoring the weather—the largest, most uncertain variable in the agricultural

outlook formula. In cooperation with the Commerce Department, the board maintains the Joint Agricultural Weather Facility to anticipate and monitor global weather patterns. This service aids experts in interpreting the probable impact of weather on crop production.

Farm Programs

The *Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service* (ASCS) administers various commodity and land-use programs aimed at supporting farm prices, adjusting farm production, and protecting natural resources.

These include:

- Commodity price-support programs which help keep production of certain crops at a level to satisfy market demands and to meet food and feed commitments in the United States and overseas, as well as to help assure farmers some return from their operations.

ASCS price-support programs cover various food, feed, and fiber commodities. Price support is required or authorized by law for wheat, corn, peanuts, rice, tobacco, wool, mohair, upland and extra-long staple cotton, honey, barley, oats, rye, sorghum, milk and its products, flax, soybeans, gum naval stores (rosin), sugarbeets, and sugarcane.



The major component of most of these programs is a price-support loan which provides postharvest financing. These interest-bearing support loans give producers flexibility to market their products at times they deem most advantageous to them, thus promoting more orderly marketing.

Various methods are used to reach these goals. Under the dairy program, for example, the price of milk is supported through purchases of processed dairy products. Tobacco and peanut prices are supported through loans to producer associations which make program benefits available to producers.

- Production adjustment programs, which contain set-aside and other cropland diversion provisions. Under these programs, the Secretary of Agriculture can authorize set-aside and other arrangements if the total supply of certain crops will likely be excessive without such actions. Farmer participation in these programs is voluntary. Also, under these programs, acreage allotments and marketing quotas may be authorized for some crops.

- The Farm Facility Loan Program, which enables ASCS to offer loans to help farmers buy, build, or remodel on-farm commodity storage facilities and to obtain drying and handling equipment.

- The Agricultural Conservation Program, which provides cost-sharing with farmers and ranchers to help prevent soil loss from wind and water erosion, solve water conservation and water quality problems, control pollution from animal waste, preserve forest resources, and encourage energy conservation.

ASCS is also responsible for programs to assist farmers during natural disasters and other emergencies, including defense preparedness plans and certain USDA-wide defense coordinating services. Agency personnel serve on State and county emergency boards.

County ASC committees provide emergency conservation assistance and emergency livestock feed to farmers struck by natural disasters.

The agency monitors activities during periods of anticipated shortages of fuel, fertilizers, pesticides, and other key farm production items to prevent hardships during shortages.

ASCS assists the Food and Nutrition Service in the distribution of commodities to domestic food programs. It also aids the Foreign

Agricultural Service in making Government-held food stocks available for foreign donation programs.

The *Commodity Credit Corporation* (CCC) is a Government-owned and operated corporation. It finances the farm programs and is authorized to support prices of agricultural commodities through loans, purchases, payments, and other operations. The CCC helps maintain adequate supplies of agricultural commodities, and it aids in their distribution. The Corporation buys goods for sale to other government agencies, foreign governments, and various relief and rehabilitation agencies.

The *Farmers Home Administration* (FmHA) administers loans for ownership and operation of family-size farms and ranches. These loans are intended to provide owner or tenant-operators access to agricultural credit necessary to enable them to earn an adequate living from their efforts.

Emergency disaster loans are made by FmHA to help farmers and ranchers recover from natural disasters. Loans are also available for soil and water conservation and pollution abatement.

All-Risk Crop Insurance programs are developed and managed by the *Federal Crop Insurance Corporation* (FCIC) and delivered to producers through the private insurance industry.

All-Risk Crop Insurance is presently available to individual farmers and group farming enterprises in 1,928 counties in 40 States. However, in the next 4 years, it is expected that the insurance will be available in every agricultural county in the United States (an estimated 3,000). Coverage is offered for 28 major crops.

All-Risk Crop Insurance covers losses due to bad weather, insects, disease, and other unavoidable natural causes. Participation is voluntary, and the producer pays a premium. Indemnity payments are made for production losses at a price selected by the insured before the growing season.

In September 1980, Congress passed the Federal Crop Insurance Act of 1980. This legislation removed previous legal limitations on the rate of crop insurance expansion into new areas and on the number of commodities insurable. It also provided for Federal subsidy for a portion of the premiums paid by insured producers.

The new insurance program now permits farmers to guarantee insurance coverage on up to 75 percent of their average yields and to select the price levels for determining payments on lost production.

As farming becomes more of a credit operation, All-Risk Crop Insurance policies are becoming increasingly important as collateral for crop production loans. Collateral assignments, by making indemnity checks payable jointly to lender and borrower, guarantee loan repayments even when crops are damaged or lost.

Environment and Natural Resources

USDA programs help protect the Nation's ecological, cultural, and historic heritage, and reflect a sensitivity to the principle that each generation is a trustee of the environment for succeeding generations.

Among agencies with important environmental responsibilities is USDA's *Forest Service*, which manages 190 million acres of the National Forest System. In addition, the Forest Service cooperates with State foresters, private forest owners, wood processors, and private and public agencies. The agency also maintains a nationwide program of research that directly or indirectly supports all management and cooperative efforts.

Forest Service programs are concerned with a variety of activities. They include timber production, outdoor recreation, habitat for fish and wildlife, watershed protection, and livestock grazing. Forest Service programs also help prevent and suppress wildfires. Among the programs are those concerned with wilderness management, forest engineering, land management planning, mining, land reclamation, and reforestation. Other aspects of the agency's work include the marketing and utilization of forest products, resource surveys, urban forestry, and pollution.

The Forest Service also is responsible for the control of forest insects and diseases, and for the development of human resources through programs such as the Job Corps and Senior Community Service Employment. In addition, the Forest Service provides incentives (such as production and distribution of seedling planting stock) that stimulate the proper management of State, county, municipal, and community forests.

The *Soil Conservation Service* (SCS) develops and carries out a national soil and water conservation program through more than 2,925 local conservation districts with more than 2.3 million cooperating landowners and operators. With the help of its cooperators, SCS inventories and assesses soil, water, and plant resources, and plans and applies conservation practices to reduce soil erosion as well as maintain the land's productivity.

The agency also administers P.L. 566, the small watershed program, which helps reduce costly upstream floods. It also has leadership for the National Cooperative Soil Survey, on which land treatments are based; the Great Plains Conservation Program; resource conservation and development areas; and the Rural Abandoned Mine Program. The agency assists with river basin studies and carries out periodic national inventories of soil, water, and related resources, as required by the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977.

In addition, SCS makes snow surveys in the West, using the automated snow telemetry



(SNOTEL) system to help forecast water supplies. SCS also participates in the Agricultural Conservation Program by providing technical assistance whenever needed.

Rural Development

Rural development is a cooperative process. It brings together public agencies, private organizations, and individual citizens. They work in cooperation to improve community facilities and services and economic opportunities for people living in the towns and farming communities outside metropolitan America.

To accomplish this, the Department's rural development program centers on *people building* (providing services and facilities needed to stimulate human development); *community facilities* (combining city conveniences with the advantages of country living); *environmental improvement* (protecting and improving our natural assets); and *economic development* (increasing farm and business investment to create jobs).

Under the Rural Development Act of 1972, USDA has the responsibility for coordinating a nationwide rural development program using services and resources of other Federal departments and agencies in cooperation with States and localities.

The Under Secretary for Small Community and Rural Development of the Department is in charge of key programs contributing to rural development and also serves as chairman of the National Rural Development Committee. This group establishes policies, sets priorities, and coordinates programs of the Department which contribute to the development of rural areas.

In each State there is a rural development committee composed of the Department's cooperating State agencies. In many States volunteer citizen groups are represented. These committees develop joint programs and activities to use all appropriate Federal and State resources in rural development.

The *Farmers Home Administration* (FmHA) provides vital financial assistance to rural people and communities of greatest need who cannot obtain commercial credit at affordable terms. The agency approaches rural development through five major avenues within its loan and grant programs: (1) Encouraging and supporting family farm ownership and operation to



provide a sound economic base for rural society; (2) providing modest, but adequate, modern homes, rental apartments, and congregate housing for the elderly and handicapped; (3) installing needed community facilities, community centers, streets, health services, and other needed amenities; (4) providing economic support to farmers affected by disaster; and (5) fostering economic development with loans for business and industrial enterprises.

Established in 1981, the *Office of Rural Development Policy* (ORDP) serves as rural America's principal advocate within the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. The office is charged with developing and overseeing implementation of a national rural development strategy. ORDP also serves as the liaison between Federal rural development agencies and public and private rural interest groups, as well as a contact for State and local governments. An extension of this function requires

ORDP to review selected Federal programs for rural-urban equity.

ORDP serves as a staff to various national committees, working groups, and advisory boards concerned with rural development.

The national rural strategy being formulated by ORDP will be based on State and local views and recommendations, as well as on national considerations. To ensure the strategy's responsiveness, ORDP is developing extensive contacts with State and local governments, regional bodies, and their national representatives. In addition, a number of public hearings will be held to provide for individual citizen input.

More than 26 million rural people in 47 States benefit from electric and telephone services provided by systems financed through loans from the *Rural Electrification Administration* (REA), the *Rural Telephone Bank*, and other lenders. REA's loan guarantee program makes available funds from non-REA sources to finance large-scale electric and telephone projects. These utility services are essential to farm productivity, rural business establishments, and are vital in furthering rural area development.

Emergency Programs

USDA defense and major natural disaster programs are coordinated through USDA State and county emergency boards, as directed by an assistant to the Secretary. In the national defense program, USDA is responsible for food from the farm through the wholesale level, fire control in rural areas, and biological and chemical warfare defense for animals and crops.

How USDA Is Organized

Secretary

Deputy Secretary

Staff Assistants

Judicial Officer

Office of Budget and Program Analysis

Office of Congressional Affairs

Office of the General Counsel

Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

Office of the Inspector General

Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Departmental Administration

Assistant Secretary

Board of Contract Appeals

Office of Administrative Law Judges

Office of Administrative Systems

Office of Finance and Management

Office of Information Resources Management

Office of Minority Affairs

Office of Operations

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Utilization

Economics

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Economic Analysis Staff

Economic Research Service

Economics Management Staff

Office of Energy

Statistical Reporting Service

World Agricultural Outlook Board

International Affairs and Commodity Programs

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Federal Grain Inspection Service

Food Safety and Inspection Service

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Office of Rural Development Policy

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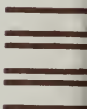
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